

# THE CRUCIFIX OF BADEN.

A Legend of the Middle Ages.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

## CHAPTER IV—Continued.

Suddenly Master Hans advanced before the girls, and taking a key from the huge purse which hung at his belt, he unlocked a casket of cedar wood, and unrolled a carpet of emeralds on a field of glittering gold, before the eyes of the spectators.

"How beautiful! how dazzling!" cried the maidens.

"Whence came such splendid jewels, such magnificent stones?" asked Master Sebald. One would think the treasures of the Eastern magicians, of whom crusaders' legends tell were spread before him.

"This," replied Master Hans, plunging his hand into the casket and drawing forth a chain set with emeralds, "is the treasure of the house of Horschheim, to which I have added, by the order of the present lord, some of my rarest stones. The count is about to celebrate the marriage of his daughter, and I desire her dowry of beauty and of castles, he wishes to give her a splendid one of jewels."

"Ah! then beautiful Lady Gertrude is to be married at last," said Mina, with a sigh of relief, for she had not yet forgotten how on the day of the tournament Johann had told her that Otho had received the crown from the hands of the young countess.

"Yes, Demoiselle Mina; and the wedding, they say, takes place in a fortnight, and will be one of the most brilliant ever celebrated in the margravate of Baden."

"But whom shall the countess marry?" asked Johann, who, without knowing why, felt his heart beat painfully.

"If rumor speaks truth, a knight of moderate fortune, but of goodly form, large heart, and name of renown. They say 'tis the Baron of Arneck; but of this I am not sure, for I have never seen the count and lady together when they come to the city."

"What! Otho, my pupil?" interrupted Master Sebald.

"And why not, old friend? If, as I think, he be he, thou wilt henceforth see him but rarely, for hereafter he will have much else to do besides moulding clay or chiselling statues."

"Ah! I fear me much the brave knight is lost to sculpture," replied Sebald, smiling.

But Johann smiled not. He drew near Mina and followed her movements with looks of anguish. He saw her cheek blanch and a cloud come over her eyes, and, fearing lest she should faint, pushed a seat to her. But Mina refused it with a resolute gesture, and without trembling approached the casket.

"Are you sure that it is Otho of Arneck she marries?" asked she in a strange tone, gazing fixedly upon Hans Barthling. "In any event, the bride will be brave in this glittering chain. Ah! if it were I—! if I were rich and possessed castles, and were a countess—think you that I would not be beautiful with those green flashings and diamonds in my hair and about my neck?"

Mina, speaking thus with a bitter laugh, and vacant stare, twined the chain around her neck and through her wavy tresses, and, in doing so, her little fingers moved so fast that none could see how they trembled.

But suddenly her words ceased, her eyes closed, her hands fell by her side, and with a feeble cry she fell upon the chair.

"My daughter! O my daughter! What aill thee?" cried old Sebald, running to her.

"Tis naught; a weakness; nothing more," said the goldsmith. "The heat of to-day was indeed, enough to make a young girl faint. Quick, Bertha! Jeanne! bring hither the Queen of Hungary's water and open the windows."

"It is doubtless the influence of the stones that hath made poor Mina ill, murmured one of the jeweller's daughters, who seemed to stand terror-stricken. "Thou knowest, father, that the sapphire brings happy dreams, the opal misfortune on its possessor, and the beryl can cause faintings. It is then perhaps the emeralds which cause Mina's illness. She is not accustomed to gaze upon them and they glitter so—the shining stones!"

"Yes, it is certainly the jewels—and their light—and the heat," stammered Johann, who, on his knees, was holding the fainting girl's hands within his own, and trying to restore her warmth. But Demoiselle Mina recovers not. Think you not, Master Sebald, that it would be well to take a litter and return to your dwelling?"

"Assuredly," replied Master Koerner, surprised and anxious at his daughter's swoon.

## CHAPTER V.

On the way home Mina opened her eyes, but she remained mute and mournful. But when, after she had been placed on a lounge in the lower hall of her dwelling, she saw that her father was about to direct Johann to hasten the arrival of a coach, she bent over to the sculptor and retained him with a hand cold as ice.

"I would speak a word with Johann alone," she murmured. "Will thou permit me my father?"

"Surely," replied the old man, fixing upon her a look of wonder, but hastening to leave the chamber.

Then Mina feebly called Johann, and made him a sign to sit at her feet.

"Thou saidst one day, my good brother, Johann," said she, "that thou wouldst spare no effort, recoil from no risk to procure me joy or happiness."

"So said I; so will I do," answered the poor youth, bending on her a look full of emotion.

"Then, Johann, thou canst preserve my greatest happiness, cause my greatest joy. I know that I cannot deceive thee; I noted thy gaze when Hans Barthling spoke of the marriage of Otho and Gertrude. Know then, Johann, that the knight of Arneck is my true—my only love; and now I would know if he hath betrayed me. It is peace of heart I need for my cure, Johann, and not the skill of the leech. Depart then, good Johann, and go to Horschheim. There thou wilt easily learn who is the countess's betrothed. And thou mayest even, without being perceived, see them pass by together, speaking low, walking hand in hand, believing themselves alone. Thou wilt return and tell me all, Johann, and I will gain strength to live until thy return; for it would be too bitter to die if Otho remaineth faithful. Thou wilt go—wilt thou not, my brother—my only friend?"

Johann's only reply was a kiss imprinted on Mina's hand and a silent pressure of his taper fingers, while two great tears rolled from his eyes. Then he departed from the House of the Angel, and, after having called the physician, saddled his horse and left the town that very evening, following the line of the high hills which stretched away toward the Rauhé Alps, at the foot of which was the castle of Horschheim.

## CHAPTER VI.

Eight days passed since Johann's departure before the young man again stood at the sculptor's door. As in that silent and gloomy house, the click of the hammer striking the stone, the cutting of the chisel on the marble, the cheerful voice of the pupils, and the pure voice of Mina, singing her love lay in the morning or canticle at eve, were no longer heard. The great window of the atelier, was opaque and black, and no spark of light appeared in the house save where the weak and pale light of a little lamp shone through the window of the young girl's room, at the top of the house, and seemingly shadowed by the angel's wings.

Johann sprang from his horse, tapped lightly at the door, and, throwing aside his travelling cloak, hastened to question the old servant.

"Where is your young lady?" "Above in her room. Her malady hath much increased since last we saw you."

"And Master Sebald?" "Is at her side. She speaks and weeps in her delirium, and the master desires that we should not approach her."

"But I may enter," said Johann. "Fear nothing, Martha, I will not disturb her; you well know that, when I departed, it was to bear a message for Demoiselle Mina."

Martha allowed the young traveller to pass, and ascended the stairs rapidly yet softly, and glided noiselessly into Mina's room, of which the door stood half open.

Beneath the thick curtains of the bed, under a canopy of blue damask the white form of the sculptor's daughter was dimly outlined, indistinct and floating like a shadow, and scarcely perceptible save where the yellow ray of the silver lamp lit up two sparkling, ardent, agitated flames from beneath her dark lashes.

Flow dry and desolate, and even fearful, were those late sweet glances, now glittering with the fires of fever! Tears would bring more gladness to her father's heart than that wild splendor. So thought Johann as he softly entered and hid behind a large arm-chair in his eagerness to escape those burning glances.

By the side of the bed Master Sebald sat gloomy and silent in a high-backed ebony chair. His grief-worn countenance and gray head rested upon a hand which seemed to Johann to have grown, even in the few days of his absence, more yellow and thin. The other hand was stretched toward the bed, and held clasped that of Mina. The old man watched every movement, every look, every sigh of his daughter. A man from time to time broke from her lips; then she pushed back with her thin fingers the waves of golden hair which fell over her pale forehead, and began to speak in short, gasping tones:

"Wilt thou pardon me, my father?" said she. "Once thou hadst confidence in me and wert happy. Nothing was wanting to thee; neither the grace of God nor the respect of

"Thou seest father, that I was right," she murmured. "Thou hast proved thy courage and thy goodness of heart. I rejoice that I am yet able to bid thee farewell. But one last question—answer, if thou lovest me. When will Otho's marriage take place?"

"In ten days," sobbed Johann.

"Tis very soon," replied Mina, shuddering. "My heart will be scarcely cold, and a single green bud will not have appeared over my grave. But may the earth be green, and the sky blue, and life sweet to him."

Saying these words she crossed her hands upon her breast, and, speaking no more, remained thus for long hours, without even casting a look upon her weeping Johann or upon her heart-broken father.

The physician soon came, and after him the priest. The first had marvelous secrets to cure the body; the latter had pious consolation and words of peace for the soul. But they sought in vain to strengthen the soul of Mina. Each day, each hour, each moment stole a spark of the waning fire of life; her grief was too great for so frail a form to bear, and one evening at the end of July, ten days after Johann's return, she closed her eyes forever, holding her father's hand in hers and the crucifix to her lips. Johann was at her foot and received her last look. She had near her in dying the Supreme Consoler of heaven and her only two friends on earth, and there was in her last moments a tenderness which the heart of the youth never forgot.

## CHAPTER VII.

Two days after, when the body of Mina had been deposited at sunset in the cemetery at Baden, Sebald and Johann, the master and pupil, found themselves alone in the atelier. Strange! It was Johann, the younger, that seemed the most afflicted,

most crushed. His eyes were swollen, his cheeks pale, his step tottering, and his face covered with tears. "Old Sebald seemed much less changed," a few furrows the more on his brow, a few more white hairs on his head, were the only visible tokens of his grief. His step was as firm, his bearing as proud as before; but a strange, steady glare, glowing and piercing, showing little trace of weariness or tears, shone from his eyes, and it was this look that the master fixed upon his pupil as they entered the atelier that made Johann shudder before its clear and threatening light.

"Johann," said the master, "it is now my turn to ask thee a question. Savest thou Otho of Arneck when thou wert at the castle of the Countess Gertrude?"

"Ay, master," replied the young man, with flushed face.

"Spokest thou with him?"

"Ay, truly."

"Didst say to him that I prayed his presence, or, at least, that he should explain himself? That I was in deepest sorrow, and Mina sick unto death?"

"Yea, truly, my master."

"And what response made he?"

"That he, too, was grieved; but that his word was pledged, and that until his marriage he might not leave the castle of the countess. The soft remembrances of youth, he added, mar not, among wise men, the projects of a ripe age."

"Tis well, Johann, and I thank thee," replied the sculptor. "I now know what I wished to know, and my resolution is taken."

Then he rose from his arm-chair and threw a gloomy glance around the walls of the studio.

"I return hither no more," he murmured. "Here have I toiled thirty years with upright heart and pure hands. Nothing that I have here completed has been sullied or profaned, I fear and served God. I honored and loved man. I then had a right to give purity to my virgins, the light of faith to my neophytes, the halo of love to my cherubims. But now all is lost—faith, renown, and child. Holy images! I cannot touch ye with bruised heart and violent hands; hating and cursing men, I may not mould the august form of the God of love. Therefore, no more will I appear in this retreat. Its windows shall remain darkened, its doors closed. I will carry with me only my grief, my memories, and this," he cried, seizing a sculptor's chisel with a short, polished, and keen blade, upon which he gazed with his strange look, as he gripped it with a feverish strength in his hand.

"Speak not so, O my master! clasp not that steel so tightly," cried Johann. "That will bring thee little of consolation or hope. Look for solace for thy sorrows to this," he said, holding an ivory crucifix before his master's eyes. "It was pressed to Mina's dying lips; she hath bequeathed it to us. Recallst thou not, my master, her smile as she gazed on it? 'Twas because beneath the shadow of the cross even death seems sweet. There is the only refuge, and there will I find shelter. The world hath had but little of joy for me, and I but little love for the world. The prior of the Augustines hath promised me a cell, and I will be happy, there to pass my life, praying or working beneath the poor robe of a monk, and preserving the memory and crucifix of Mina."

"It is well, my son," replied Koerner. "To each one his own savior and light, his own strength and safety. If, thanks to the priest's pur or cross, thou findest calm and resignation, may I not seek the encouragement and strength of my sculptor's chisel? Who may say, that, without these walls, I am not destined to achieve some work that will immortalize my name and console my heart? Then, why not leave to a father's grief the hope and glory, of triumph, and—this little sculptor's tool?" demanded the old man, with flushed face and sparkling eyes.

"I wish thee triumph and glory, my master. But yet, if thou canst do so, remember, when thou art active, diligent, and famous, that thy old pupil Johann, who would not be an artist and became a monk, will never cease to bless thee in his prayers."

So saying, the youth, weeping, kissed old Sebald's hand and left the dwelling, carrying with him the crucifix, his last and only treasure. When he had departed, Sebald Koerner, too, left the studio, after casting a last look on the bas-relief of the balcony, the mouldings, and the statues. He double-locked the door and took away the key, and, issuing from his house, he walked for a long time through the fields. Arriving at length at the side of a deep pool near the foot of the hills, he bent over the tranquil waters and dropped the key therein.

The water splashed and the waves hastened in increasing rings from the spot, and then became even more clear and peaceful than before—still themselves ere the key had touched the bottom. Sebald then again stood erect, with his icy

glance and strange smile, yet, grasping the chisel in his hand, and then concealing it in his bosom as if it were a dagger.

(To be Continued.)

## INCREASE OF CRIME AND ITS CAUSES.

As the century draws to a close every friend of humanity is sick at heart at the terrible increase of crime. The horrible increase in horrors is the effect of well-defined causes, and as long as they continue to grow, crime will not cease to increase. These causes are infidelity and a pagan system of morals. Infidelity in some shape or other has become fashionable, and the preacher who most minimizes dogma and enunciates the boldest anti-Christian theories, is certain to draw the largest audiences. Ministers of the gospel boldly walk on the brink of atheism and, Judas-like, betray their Master. While their hearers admire their audacity they gradually come to look on religion as a sham, and fall into the abyss of unbelief. Hell has no terrors for them, for they do not believe in it. Many become criminals. They have nothing to restrain them but the fear of the laws of man.

But if infidelity leads to crime, the system of morals taught in works of fiction and encouraged by courts of divorce and bankruptcy is the fruitful parent of much of the evil which afflicts society. Our public schools do not pretend to teach morals. They supply a thin veneer of propriety and call it virtue. If parents were willing and able to instruct their sons and daughters in Christian doctrine, they might counteract the evils of defective moral training. Home influences and home training are most powerful for good or evil. When boys and girls leave school the duties of the parent multiply. Long before the Christian era it was said that a father who neglected to give his son a trade or a profession was his son to steal, and the truth of that old saying is verified daily in the newspaper reports of the idle youths and young men who wage an endless war on society.

The manner in which some parents bring up their sons is positively unjust and cruel. They give them an education which unfits them for the ranks of honest industry, and they are obliged to live by their wits. This living by one's wits is but another name for dishonesty, and it helps to increase the number of criminals. The only way to stop the increase of crime is to remove the causes, and that can be done only by a return to the old-fashioned and true doctrine of Christianity. The Psalmist says: "Remember thy last end and thou wilt never sin." And if the rising generation are taught that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning," they will not be ashamed to profess their faith in another and better world, and they will neglect all the rights of their fellow-men. Legislation cannot stem the torrent of crime which madly rushes on. The religion of Christ can calm the turbulent waters and thereby save society.—New York Sunday Democrat.

What a splendid type of tireless activity is the sun as the psalmist describes it issuing like a bridegroom from his chamber and rejoicing like a strong man to run a race. Every man ought to rise in the morning refreshed by slumber and renewed by rest, eager for the struggle of the day. But how rarely this is so. Most people rise still unfreshed, and dreading the strain of the day's labors. The cause of this is deficient vitality and behind this lies a deficient supply of pure, rich, blood and an inadequate nourishment of the body. There is nothing that will give a man strength and energy, as will Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It does this by increasing the quantity of the blood supply. This nourishes the nerves, feeds the brain, builds up misshapen organs, and gives that sense of strength and power which makes the struggle of life a joy. The "good feeling" which follows the use of "Golden Medical Discovery" is not due to stimulation as it contains no alcohol, whisky or other intoxicant. It does not brace up the body, but builds it up into a condition of sound health.

Camel races are held regularly in the south of Algeria, where valuable prizes are offered for the encouragement of the breed of racers, and as much interest is taken in their preparation and performance as in that of race horses at Latonia. The racing camels are the result of careful breeding through many generations, and in size, temper, and appearance are so different from the ordinary beast of burden that they might almost be considered a different race of animals. Perhaps the most conspicuous characteristic of the ordinary camel is its extreme slowness. Nothing on earth will ever induce it to hurry. A £5 note will buy a very fair specimen, but for a melart, or racing camel, five or ten times that sum is required to effect a purchase. The race, however, can be depended

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(From the St. John's News, Nov. 10.)

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